GUIDANCE ON OBJECTIVES

The Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs (OAPP) provides AFL funds to grantees to conduct programs that hopefully will produce good outcomes. That is why in Requests for Applications (RFAs), OAPP encourages new applicants to develop and formulate a few, good outcome objectives or what the Public Management Institute terms S.M.A.R.T. objectives. These kinds of objectives are measurable and evaluators should focus their evaluation activities on measuring such S.M.A.R.T. objectives. OAPP realizes that many current project directors did not write the original grant application and are stuck with the objectives contained in these applications. Hence it is important for Project Directors to review with their evaluators the objectives contained in their grant applications and make sure they are S.M.A.R.T. The following is a guidance on writing S.M.A.R.T. objectives contained in the application kit.

Good applications should contain a few <u>outcome</u> objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-framed (S.M.A.R.T.).

Specific: An objective should specify one major result directly related to the program goal, state who is going to be doing what, to whom, by how much, and in what time-frame. It should specify what will be accomplished and how the accomplishment will be measured.

Measurable: An objective should be able to describe in realistic terms the expected results and specify how such results will be measured.

Achievable: The accomplishment specified in the objective should be achievable within the proposed time line and as a direct result of program activities.

Realistic: The objective should be reasonable in nature. The specified outcomes, expected results, should be described in realistic terms.

Time-framed: An outcome objective should specify a target date or time for its accomplishments. It should state who is going to be doing what, by when, etc.[1]

Outcome Objectives

An outcome objective is a statement which defines a measurable result the project expects to accomplish.

In the health field, outcome objectives are important because they can facilitate monitoring of changes in behavior (e.g. increasing parenting skills) in a given population over time. Therefore, outcome objectives should be described in terms that measure what results your project will bring about.

As illustrated in the following example, when drafting outcome objectives specify one major result per objective to be accomplished. State who is going to be doing what, when and how much it will be

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[1]<u>How to Get Grants</u>. San Francisco, CA: The Public Management Institute, 1981.

accomplished, and how you will measure it[2].

Example of outcome objectives from previous AFL applications:

1. By the end of Year 1, 80% of the program participants will increase their level of knowledge on the reproductive cycle as indicated by pre- and post-test surveys.

Process Objectives

A good application should also include process objectives directly related to the few outcome objectives listed. They may be described in list or narrative form in the time table, work plan, program narrative, or with the related outcome objective. Process objectives operationalize the outcome objectives by describing the actual activities and/or methods that must be implemented for your program to have the desired effect on clientele.

Remember: Outcome objectives relate to benefits, changes, results. Process objectives will state the types of materials, programs or services to be provided in order to achieve that outcome[3].

Example of process objectives related to outcome objectives:

Outcome Objective: By the end of Year 1, 75% of the program participants will state their intention to remain sexually abstinent as indicated by pre- and post-test surveys.

Process Objectives: 1). Project staff will use curriculum materials which address the value of sexual abstinence, as well as involve the participants in role playing to help them develop the skills to negotiate sexual situations.

2) Weekly peer sessions will be held for each program year for participants. These sessions will be interactive and will reiterate information taught in the curriculum materials.

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[2]Proposal Writing Skills, HIV/AlDS Technical Assistance Paper, 1992. Published by: The United States Conference of Mayors, with support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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